

Message Text

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ORIGIN SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 NSCE-00 /026 R

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S/S - MR. ORTIZ

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV NIACT

INFO AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS IMMEDIATE

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 214968

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, MILI, SY, IS

SUBJECT: SYRIAN CLAIMS OF DISENGAGEMENT VIOLATIONS

REF: TEL AVIV 5682

FOR AMBASSADOR FROM UNDER SECRETARY SISCO

1. APPRECIATE YOUR REPORT OF YOUR MEETING WITH PERES. I BELIEVE THAT SYRIAN ALLEGATION OF ISRAELI DISENGAGEMENT VIOLATION IS SUFFICIENTLY IMPORTANT TO BE RAISED AGAIN WITH PERES. AT ISSUE HERE IS NOT SIMPLY NATURE OF ALLEGED VIOLATION BUT RATHER IMPORTANCE OF OUR BEING RESPONSIVE TO SYRIAN REQUEST FOR ASSISTANCE, PARTICULARLY AT THIS TIME. AS REPORTED IN DAMASCUS 3371, THIS IS FIRST TIME IN OVER YEAR THAT SYRIAN CHIEF OF STAFF HAS COME TO US WITH SPECIFIC PROBLEM ABOUT AN ISRAELI ACTION AND HAS SOLICITED OUR ADVICE.

2. I WOULD APPRECIATE YOUR RAISING SUBJECT OF THIS POSSIBLE
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ISRAELI VIOLATION ONCE AGAIN WITH PERES ALONG FOLLOWING
LINES:

(A) WE WOULD LIKE BETTER UNDERSTANDING OF MERITS OF
SYRIAN ALLEGATION.

B) WESTRONGLY BELIEVE THAT IN ORDER TO RETAIN CREDIBILITY IN DAMASCUS WE SHOULD BE SEEN BY SYRIANS TO BE

INVESTIGATING THEIR CHARGES THOROUGHLY AND WOULD LIKE GOVERNMENT OF ISRAEL'S ASSISTANCE IN DOING SO.

(C) THERE SEEMS TO BE IMPORTANT DIFFERENCE ON THE FACTS BETWEEN SYRIAN ALLEGATION AND ISRAELI RESPONSE (TEL AVIV 5658) REGARDING FREQUENCY OF "BORDER POLICE" PATROLS. SHIHABI HAS TOLD US THAT DURING LAST WEEK OF AUGUST FOR FIRST TIME ISRAEL BEGAN RUNNING APC'S AND HALF-TRACKS BETWEEN LINES A AND A-1 ALONG DISENGAGEMENT LINE NEAR KUNEITRA. YET WE HAVE BEEN TOLD BY ISRAELI AUTHORITIES THAT BORDER POLICE HAVE BEEN CONDUCTING ROUTINE PATROLS FOR PAST YEAR USING APC'S AND HALF-TRACKS IN THIS AREA. COULD PERES CHECK THIS DISCREPANCY AND IF POSSIBLE DOCUMENT ROUTINE USAGE OF APC'S AND HALF-TRACKS, AS REPORTED TO US.

(D) IN ANY EVENT, WE FEEL THAT IT WOULD BE DIFFICULT IF NOT IMPOSSIBLE TO DISTINGUISH BETWEEN BORDER POLICE AND MILITARY TROOPS IN APC'S OR HALF-TRACKS. THEIR DRESS IS SUBSTANTIALLY INDISTINGUISHABLE, AND WE UNDERSTAND THAT BORDER POLICE MAY BE UNDER OPERATIONAL CONTROL OF IDF.

(E) WE WONDER IF SURVEILLANCE OF AREA BETWEEN LINE A AND LINE A-1 COULD NOT BE ACCOMPLISHED IN SOME OTHER WAY WHICH WOULD MINIMIZE THIS PARTICULAR IRRITANT AT VERY SENSITIVE TIME. FOR EXAMPLE, COULD NOT BORDER POLICE PATROL IN SCOUT CARS, SINCE SYRIAN OBJECTION SEEMS TO BE FOCUSED ON USE OF APC'S AND HALF-TRACKS? COULD SURVEILLANCE OF THIS AREA BE ACCOMPLISHED FROM HIGH POINTS IMMEDIATELY TO REAR OF AREA IN QUESTION? WOULD THERE BE YET SOME OTHER METHOD OF PATROL WHICH PERES COULD SUGGEST?

(F) WE WOULD WELCOME ISRAELI SUGGESTIONS AND COOPERATION IN RESOLVING SYRIAN COMPLAINT. KISSINGER

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: Z
Capture Date: 26 AUG 1999
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: ALLEGATIONS, CEASEFIRE VIOLATIONS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 01 SEP 1975
Decaption Date: 28 MAY 2004
Decaption Note: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: greeneet
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1975STATE214968
Document Source: ADS
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: NEA/IAI:MDSTERNBERG:WD
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: 11652 GDS
Errors: n/a
Film Number: D750313-0517
From: STATE
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1975/newtext/t197509107/baaaabcr.tel
Line Count: 90
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, TEXT ON MICROFILM
Office: ORIGIN SS
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: EXDIS
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators:
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: EXDIS
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: greeneet
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 11 AUG 2003
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <11 AUG 2003 by KelleyW0>; APPROVED <26 NOV 2003 by greeneet>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
06 JUL 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: <DBA CORRECTED> gwr 971020
Subject: n/a
TAGS: MILI, PFOR, IS, SY, MILI, PFOR
To: TEL AVIV NIACT INFO DAMASCUS
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 06 JUL 2006